(e) Mergers, if based on the principles of business complementarity and synergy, can be helpful in terms of branch network rationalization, and in improving the competitiveness of the merged entities.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

FDI in International airports

29. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the policy framed for foreign direct investment in building two international airports in Mumbai and New Delhi;

(b) what are the reasons for protests and dharnas by trade union in this regard; and

(c) the measures proposed for a comprehensive look at all the airports that need to be upgraded?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Government has decided that maximum permissible limit for foreign direct investment in the Joint Venture Companies for the international airports in Mumbai and New Delhi will be fixed at 49 per cent.

(b) Airports Authority Employee's Union is protesting against the restructuring and modernisation of Delhi and Mumbai airports through Joint Venture route with Private Sector Participation.

(c) Upgradation and Modernisation of airports of Airports Authority of India (AAI) is an on-going process. AAI takes up the works of modernisation and development of airports as necessitated *inter-alia* by the status of passenger facilities and the air traffic requirements.

Upgradation of airports

30. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to upgrade those airports which are not upto the standard of world class airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Upgradation and modernisation of airports infrastructure facilities are continuous processes taken up on the basis of traffic and other related requirements.

Airports Authority of India (AAI) is in the process of restructuring metro airports of Delhi and Mumbai to develop them into world-class standards.

Modernisation and upgradation of passenger terminal facilities have also been planned by AAI on the basis of traffic, requirements at Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Varanasi, Calicut, Visakhapatnam, Dibrugarh, Gaya, Goa, Ranchi, Madurai, Trichy, Rajkot, Bhavnagar and Surat airports.

Upgradation of runways, navigational and landing aids have also been planned by AAI at Jaipur, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Varanasi, Visakhapatnam, Mangalore, Trichy, Madurai, Raipur, Khajuraho, Jammu and Amritsar airports.

Modernisation of IA fleet

31. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to modernise Indian Airlines fleet;

(b) whether it is a fact that Indian Airlines propose to acquire new planes;

(c) if so, the details in this regard;

(d) whether these planes will be acquired on Wet Lease system; and

(e) if so, the details of the financing for the acquisition of new planes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Indian Airlines has proposed to acquire 43 aircraft comprising A319, A320 and A321 for replacement of the ageing fleet of A300 and B737-200 as well as to meet the projected growth.